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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Update 7 – 9:45 a.m.

City makes repair to River Road sewer pipe

Using special pumps, tanker trucks and other equipment, the city was able to make a temporary repair early this morning to the River Road forcemain sewer pipe. Preparations to make a permanent repair are already underway.

The repair was completed about 7:30 a.m. this morning, but the flow of water to the pipe was stopped earlier at about 2:15 a.m., using the tanker trucks and pumps brought in especially for this repair.

The tankers were brought in to retrieve wastewater at two pump stations before it flowed into the forcemain pipe so that workers had more time to make the repair.

Approximately 2 million gallons of wastewater flow through the River Road forcemain each day. City officials estimate that roughly half of the flow was retrieved via tanker trucks each day. By 2:15 a.m. today when the flow was stopped, the city estimates up to 4.8 million gallons spilled, with about 2.4 million gallons retrieved by tanker trucks that have been pumping wastewater continuously since the spill was discovered.

Wastewater not captured has spilled into the nearby Cape Fear River. The state has issued a precautionary swimming advisory for the Cape Fear River in New Hanover and Brunswick counties.

The forcemain broke on Monday afternoon after a contractor for a local utility hit it while excavating to install underground utilities. The portion of forcemain that was hit is located at the intersection of River Road and Shipyard Boulevard, at the entrance to the state Ports facility.

Clean up efforts will continue today and tomorrow, along with water quality testing. As a precaution, the city recommends that citizens not come into contact with the water.

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For more information, contact city Public Information Officer Malissa Talbert at 342-2736 or 470-8720.